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J: So CH you were asking what? Oh, wait a minute.

CH: OK, so I was asking regarding what you would characterized alcoholism because in a lot of things we've read they measure alcoholism by the amount of people drink but sometimes people will drink on a regular basis but it's not excessive or problematic so I'm trying to get an idea of what people actually see as an alcohol problem and abuse of alcoholism?

S23: I think it's delusion to say that a person who drinks everyday is not an alcoholic because it's a, from what I've seen is a dependency, even though it's a just a little. But I have people, friends who, their families never say they are alcoholics but they always have to have at least one drink. At least that we see, who knows when they are in private. It's daily they have to have their six pack, I don't know if it stops there. It's like a need, it's already a dependency, because you can't say I'll go without my beer today or I'll go without my drink today, on the outside it might not look like alcoholism because on the outside the person functions or appears to function but underneath their maybe not functioning, that's how I see it. The people that I know. You always see them with their beer or their drink, always. My question would be what would they do if they didn't drink one day. And if there is any discussion or kind of like a joke, I don't know if there are levels of alcoholism or degrees of alcoholism but at least it points towards it for a person who drinks everyday because, from what I know now from alcoholism it's a daily thing then it's already a dependency. It's a powerful drug; it's just that it's socially acceptable so we don't put it in the same category as cocaine and other things, so I believe it does create a problem. If not a problem for that person outwardly it creates a problem for the children and the family, even though that person is not called an alcoholic. His drinking everyday has to affect him in some way. A six pack a day, at least for the moment, for an hour or two he is intoxicated, now he might be able to take more than other people but it already affects the way he interacts with his family. The stress level of the family is aware that this man, or this woman, is going to be drunk soon or is going to be unstable, at least for the amount of time that person is drinking. So I think alcoholism has to be a problem, it isn't a little bit of it. You are not just a little bit of an alcoholic, you either are or your not, that's what I believe. Because I've seen the effects of just of supposedly social drinker, I don't mean, I guess social drinker is someone who takes a drink when the occasion but a person who is kind of dependant everyday is already on their way to alcoholism if that is what alcoholism means, the term alcoholism, or is already having a problem that we don't see.

CH: In the Latino community or in the Mexican-American community, to be more specific, since you are Mexican-American, what would you say are the socially accepted norms of drinking?

S23: Oh, gosh, since I'm not a drinker. I'm not an abstainer, very seldom do I drink, norms, I don't know about norms. I guess what I just said, what I see, my friends or a family member drinking every day, I believe he has a problem. When we have a party and you know, we don't party everyday or week but 2 or 3 times a year, people will have a drink, like a cocktail, I don't think they call themselves, but it's this kind of dependency to get going in the morning or in the day, they are not themselves until they have a drink.

CH: Do you think alcoholism is a problem within the Latino Community or do you think it's an equal issue to whites, blacks and other Americans?

S23: I think in this society alcoholism is a problem. In my community it has been since I was a kid and I think it still is. But I see more drug use than alcoholism. I'm sure, my world is here, I deal with a lot young people, school children so I don't see the alcoholism, and I see the drug use. I think, it maybe equal half, I have no idea. I have a family member who has been in a rehab program and most of the people there are from drug use. But alcoholism is right in there and I see that some of their rehabs they feel a lesser step down is drinking but just one leads to the other, they are intertwined, so I think it's still a problem here, I think it's a social, I think it also has to do with things not working. When you don't have a job and you feel like things are not working and you cant provide for your family or your just not doing it or making it, it's just another stress that you can drink more because that makes you feel better so I think it goes hand-in-hand the socio-economic factor is, but that is not true also because you find people that are successful and alcoholics also but maybe more incidence of it, I don't know, it's a problem that's been here and still is here.

CH: Do you think, what about the immigrant community, the immigrant Mexicans or the immigrant Central Americans? I don't know if you know many Central Americans in this area, but the immigrant population, do you see alcoholism as more of a problem in that sector of the Latino community or the Mexican-American community?

S23: I think, well from my experience the Mexican immigrants that I've met, mostly through my students and around here, they drink a lot. But more drinking than drug use, but you know it's still a problem. I think it's still there, I don't know if it's larger than other areas or than other groups. I think as long as there are other problems not, there is going to be alcoholism or at least heaving drinking, most of the parents that I know and some of my neighbors they do drink a lot and ah, but now everyone in the family not just one or two, there are big families around me and the young men, the other young men just drink themselves to all hours. They go to work but it's just part of like there family style and it's not frowned upon, maybe because it has not created a big problem in their family but they do drink a lot and I do see that more than drug use, for the new immigrants that I see, for the Mexicanos.

J: A while ago when you said that your father in law was an alcoholic and you said that your mother in law suffered, what do you mean by that?

S23: well, she suffered because of his abusive language, his going off into these rages and then when he was sober he was silent and he looked like a nice guy but he never interacted with his children, the older ones that is, with the younger ones saw less of it as he got older but at the very end he couldn't drink for some reason, oh he had a stroke that was actually 12 years before, the last stroke, but my husband took care of him, he started losing his memory he actually ended up with Alzheimer's, several of his family did. My mother-in-law died and she suffered such, he was really uncouth, nauseas man when he was drunk and he was drunk all the time. He was a really hard worker, his family were house movers and later he worked for an aircraft company so he made pretty good money but every Friday he wouldn't come home, and sometimes my mother-in-law would call my husband to go take him because he would spend the check and he would be just a…well he was a very good mechanic, he would come in with his oil stuff and plop himself and my mother-in-law, she wouldn't cry she would, because if she told him anything they would just get into an argument and he would use this language and she would just go into her room, she lived like that all her life and she never left him. And my husband left home for it because he was a big guy because by the time he was 15 he was already 6ft tall, so he told his dad that if he ever talked to his mother like that, kill, so I mean he threatened him so it was just a terrible situation at home. The younger ones don't have that memory of their dad because she died young so as a single male he would take flowers to her every Sunday, I wish he had been like that, he never saw his dad be affectionate or calm, lovingly to his mom and so the younger ones didn't have a memory of how he treated his mother so they never knew, and it was through his alcoholism…

CH: But after his stroke he had to stop drinking?

S23: Yeah, he had to. And then the children, the older adults who would care for him they didn't live with him but they started to take everything; they made sure there was no alcohol for him. It helped his personality because it thought he was just and obnoxious man. But my husband was the one who remembers, he was the oldest, he has such memories, he says, he forgives his dad, he's the only dad and that, 'he needs me.' But one time he did tell his brothers and sisters how he had been treated and they didn't believe him, and he said, 'well you don't remember but I forgive my dad, but I don't know if I can ever forget how he treated our mother' and they just couldn't believe it.

J: So he gets paid every Friday?

S23: At that time yes, his payday were just…

J: And he go out and blow it, the whole paycheck?

S23: Well, a lot of it or sometimes, she would send somebody, like an older son to his hang out and sometimes he did sometimes he didn't but he was just drunk.

J: did he drink other days, before work after work?

S23: After work.

J: Everyday of the week?

S23: I don't know about everyday but often. When he was working, I guess, when I saw him he would just be morose just out of every bodies way, so he never interacted with the children, the older ones anyway. He made a side living, he was a mechanic, a lot of people would bring their cars or they would pay him with cars, so he was always fixing cars.

CH: They would make him payments with cars?

S23: Yeah, they would give a car and fix it and then trade or you know, he always had something going, he was very resourceful.

J: We are asking you some of these details because, some of the literature she has read and I've read too don't have details just broad statements and we are interested in some of the patterns of behavior.

S23: He was very, he'd get into fights and even as an older man, even some of his sons did the same thing. She suffered, my mother-in-law because her sons were the ones who had married and left, she had so many, she had at least three. One of them was just like his dad, as soon as he started drinking it was a big problem, my husband who was the oldest and a big guy and they really respected him, they would call him, someone would call him from the family to go and call so and so because a fight was starting and he'd go over there and they would obey him and then he'd give them a talking too and then they and their dad would just end up arguing about stupid things, they'd get loud and contrary and they would be home drinking at home and they would get into a fight.

J: How many sons in the family?

S23: There were 10 sons and 4 daughters.

J: And how many of those do you think had a drinking problem?

S23: At one time about 4 of them and when they got married they kind of straightened out, some of them. The one that was the worst one, he didn't get married for a long time, when he got married he stopped drinking and became a Jehovah witness. So then he went the other way to other extreme, but that's fine his life had changed. But in their growing up years, teens and early twenties, it was really difficult for my mother-in-law. Then she had the diabetes which is a stress, which I learned because my husband had diabetes, it's so not only debilitating but deteriorating it, the stress just makes the diabetes go hand in hand, life threatening even.

J: Four sons had had a drinking problem, where they the oldest sons?

S23: No, but the one that had all the arguments where the four older sons and then the ones who had the drinking problem started drinking young like teenagers and at least four of them who were the oldest then later while they had different groups, the one who went to Vietnam he was really, well it could have been the Vietnam thing.

CH: Was he one of the older ones?

S23: No, he is one of the younger ones, he had a drug problem and he was unstable, kind of strange. He looks OK now but I understand he still drinks, I don't see him, I don't know too much about him.

J: I just wondered if some of the sons were influenced, or modeled their own behavior after the father.

S23: I think it had an influence, my father-in-laws family, he was one of ten brothers and sisters, he was one of 7 sons and four daughters and all of them were alcoholics and their family, there get-to-tog ethers were known. When I married my husband I didn't know them to well, I knew of the family and they would say 'you mean you married into the E------ family?' Every party they had, every family gathering was a big riot in there, a brawl, people would get, it was just a continued, they were known for that and what is so interesting is that we have reunions now and all most all of them have died, well my husband died of diabetes, but I think there are two that are still living. All of them died of Alcoholism and three of them died, I mean have Alzheimer's but I met with their children that would be my husbands cousins and all they had was these memories of what I'm speaking, of how there father was and he said it was, they haven't continued that legacy but there only memory of their dad was of him being drunk, mistreating the mother, or calling the police, that was there family. My mother didn't know that or else I don't know how far I would've, I didn't either even though we were in the same neighborhood but you don't, especially if you're a girl, you don't stray to far from your very own street.

J: You've lived in this immediate area all your life?

S23: Yeah.

J: And your father-in-law and mother-in-law, did they live here?

S23: There parents were immigrants, she was born in Mexico but came over when she was very young, he was born here, his family had been here a long time.

J: A while ago when you said all of these people died of alcoholism…

S23: All of his brothers, his uncles, at least, there were 7 brothers. Well, my father-in-law may not have died of alcoholism he had Alzheimer's, he had drank for 12 years, all his life he died when he was 78, drank all his life. All his early years his fruitful years

were, you know, heavy drinking with alcohol, he never called it that, I never saw him, I only saw him sober very few times.

CH: And you said his brothers all died from alcoholism?

S23: I think two had Alzheimer's but they were all heavy drinkers. The older ones who were like my father-in-law, there early years up to their 40's, 50's they were heavy drinkers and as they got older they all had some medical problem and it's interesting at least 4 of them had Alzheimer's, in fact his aunt, my father-in-law's aunt was a young woman, closer to his age than to, she has Alzheimer's, she's still living, so I cant talk to her about her family, she doesn't know and his mother, my husbands grandmother died of as Alzheimer's but she was a heavy drinker too, along with her husband. It's interesting, so I've always wondered about my children.

J: What do they call heavy drinkers? Just heavy drinkers?

S23: Drinking regularly, not only just drinking but getting drunk and you know getting.

J: What did they call it? These people what did they refer to it as? If anything?

S23: Hard drinking. 'Tomadores' (the drinkers) 'Todos son Tomadores', they are all drinkers.

J: Just to call them drinkers indicates they are heavy drinkers?

S23: Yeah. I would think so.

J: What was the Spanish term you used?

S23: 'Tomadores.' It translates to drinkers. But there children, the ones who've I talked to now in recent years they call their parents alcoholics. It's interesting, the older ones, well my husband, I haven't held any of his children call him alcoholic.

CH: But all the brothers and sisters,

S23: They never, I never even say, I've only talked to the cousins because they are the ones that have the memories because I've been doing genealogy and we've gotten together and that's when these feelings about the, my husbands cousins have come out and they remember my father being very abusive with my mother-in-law. I never saw him beat her but just verbal abuse, ohh terrible. And that's what they remember about him, they didn't continue a closeness the children didn't, the brothers would get together but the family, well, the wives of this family the E-------- got away from the family because they didn't have a good times with them, they were suffering there husbands behavior, so their children kind of they were divorced or the children where just not brought together, so all these huge family, we had a reunion of almost 300 people, so in the last three years we've been meeting, and the immediate family went this way because

of the alcoholism and of course you talk about the good times and the good things but in talking individually I was really surprised not shocked, you know, it stands to reason that was there parents, they talk about how there parents were there mother and how they suffered and how they suffered or how they saw there father or uncle or aunts and this is how, and they never say, maybe among each other they do, but they just prefer not to say that there father was an alcoholic and abusive, or this or that, they just talk about him in positive terms, which is nice for there children but because of my age and husbands age we saw that, my husband of course more than I did.

J: We've been here for 2 hours and we have an hour and half on video so maybe we should leave you alone for a while. But maybe come back next week in the morning?

S23: Yes, it would be nice in the morning.

J: OK, let's set, will do that, she'll be out of town that weekend, I'm going to be out of town briefly but I think it's the same weekend she is but if there is a problem will call you.

S23: So it would be next Tuesday?

J: The 30th.

CH: What did we say the time was?

J: 10:30

S23: Do I have, I think you gave me your number but I should have it just in case something comes up. Because Tuesday I think is the weekend my family might be getting together and everything.

J: Why don't you, well, let me find this yellow paper because it's easier to see than the card and then you add yours to it.

CH: Sounds good to me.

J: OK, lets turn that camera, we are both left-handed.

S23: Oh really? (laughter)

J: I'd like to think that's why we get along well.

S23: (laughter)

J: And also why we ask similar questions.

END OF TAPE